

that these businesses may have suffered the most significant economic effects of all demographic groups. Through the past year, I have sought to ensure that the Small Business Administration's grants and loans flow to smaller and minority-owned businesses.

Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders have also served our Nation in important public service roles. Norm Mineta, after spending 20 years in the House of Representatives, served two Presidents—Bill Clinton and George W. Bush—first as Secretary of Commerce and then as the longest serving Secretary of Transportation. I was proud to serve with him in the House and with Senator Daniel K. Inouye of Hawaii from 2006 to 2012 during his tenure as President pro tempore of the Senate, a role that made him the highest ranking Asian-American government official in the history of the United States. Of course, KAMALA D. HARRIS eclipsed that distinction this year when she became Vice President—the first Asian American ever to hold that role. I am also proud every day to serve alongside Senators MAZIE HIRONO and TAMMY DUCKWORTH, two strong leaders who are committed to promoting the well-being and progress of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders along with all Americans.

The Asian-Americans and Pacific Islander population has long endured racism and prejudice. This discrimination reached a peak when President Roosevelt ordered the incarceration of over 100,000 Japanese Americans in internment camps as war began with the Empire of Japan in World War II. Over the last year and a half, we have seen an alarming and dangerous rise in prejudicial treatment and racially motivated hate crimes and attacks. According to a recent report, there were nearly 3,800 reported cases of anti-Asian discrimination related to COVID-19 between March 2020 and February 2021. Dangerous rhetoric such as calling COVID-19 the Chinese virus jeopardizes the safety and well-being of millions of Asian Americans.

It is time we stand up and protect our fellow neighbors, friends, coworkers, and loved ones. We need an all hands-on-deck approach to combat anti-Asian bias, prejudice, discrimination, hate crimes, and violence. Congress overwhelmingly passed S. 937, the COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act, which Senators HIRONO and DUCKWORTH introduced. This legislation serves as a pledge to our Asian-American community that we, as the United States of America, stand in solidarity with you and will not tolerate violations of your civil rights. I was proud to cosponsor Senators HIRONO and DUCKWORTH's resolution condemning discrimination against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic. Working together with our local, State, national, and international partners—along with our allies in the private sector and faith

community—we can stem this dangerous trend and provide a sense of peace and security to our Asian-American brothers and sisters. In doing so, I am committed to listening to and being guided by the voices of those individuals and communities who have suffered harm.

Asian Pacific American Heritage Month offers all Americans the opportunity to recognize and to appreciate the important role of this community in our Nation, both throughout history and today. It is more important than ever that we all take advantage of it.

BORDER SECURITY

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam President, in the 4 months since the Democrats took control of the U.S. Government, they have not once indicated they understand the severity of the crisis playing out along our southern border.

It is hard to believe they get the same reports from Customs and Border Protection as I do, so just in case they haven't seen this month's update yet, I am going to go ahead and run through the numbers.

In April, CBP apprehended more than 178,000 people trying to illegally cross our border.

Almost 14,000 of them were unaccompanied children or single minors.

Drug seizures were up 6 percent from March. We have already seized more fentanyl this year than we did all last year.

On top of all that we are still catching smugglers trying to pass off counterfeit face masks, prohibited COVID test kits, and banned pharmaceuticals.

It is important to understand that all of this, from the human trafficking to the drug smuggling to the bootleg PPE operations, are symptoms of a much bigger problem.

We are dealing with a systemic humanitarian, health and safety, and national security crisis that gets worse every time the Biden administration doubles down on open borders rhetoric.

What is worse, they are treating the chaos like a logistics issue. Instead of trying to reduce the flow of migrants coming to the southern border, the Biden administration is trying to speed the flow.

They are actively trying to move as many migrants into our country as possible.

Last week, we received reports that the Department of Health and Human Services is using Chattanooga, TN, as a rally point for unaccompanied minors on their way to meet up with their sponsors or move on to area shelters and homes.

We saw video of the children getting off of planes at Wilson Air Center and boarding buses to continue on their journey. At least four planes full of unaccompanied minors landed in Chattanooga last week.

It is important to realize that all this was happening in the dead of night,

without the knowledge of any Tennessee elected officials or community leaders.

No transparency, no coordination, no notice whatsoever.

This is cause for concern not only because HHS circumvented State authorities but because this Agency has a history of operating under a veil of secrecy when it concerns their handling of migrant children.

Back in 2014, HHS blocked congressional oversight of their migrant housing facilities. Our attempts to tour one such facility, which at the time housed more than 1,000 children, were met with delays, denials and refusals.

Fast-forward to today, and HHS is being just as secretive about how they are managing care for these children. Fortunately, eyewitnesses have come forward to confirm the scope and secrecy of this operation.

One source said: "They have intentionally not shared a lot of information with us. They don't want this to get out."

He went on: "They had, to my understanding, a field full of buses with more buses and more buses running all of these routes. Now, they're flying the kids because the buses were easier to videotape going down the highway. They've changed their strategy from buses to flying . . . In Chattanooga and other cities, motorcoach companies are waiting on planes to land and continuing their trek further north, dropping kids off along the way."

Now, let's be clear about one thing: The children in those buses are victims—victims of irresponsible rhetoric, of bad policy, and of manipulation and abuse by traffickers.

I would implore my colleagues to listen to these stories and to accept that the tragedy is compounded by the knowledge that none of these children should have been on those buses in the first place.

Moving children through Border Patrol custody, into HHS custody, and then delivering them to sponsors throughout the country is not a solution to the problem. It only makes the problem worse.

If Democrats want to embrace a "humane" approach to immigration reform, they should stop worrying about those talking points and secure the border. Treat this like the crisis it is.

Restore the Migrant Protection Protocols. I have introduced a bill that would make that happen; all we need is a few votes and a signature.

Fully embrace our title 42 authority to turn away adults and children who attempt to enter the country illegally. Close the loophole that has tempted so many parents to send their children to the border alone.

Resume construction of the border wall, and invest in the infrastructure, technology, and manpower it will take to truly secure those points of entry.

But above all else, stop making promises you can't keep.

This is the most important piece of advice I can give to my colleagues on

the other side of the aisle and to the administration.

I know that you believe opening the border is compassionate policy, but the cartels are exploiting your version of compassion and using it to manipulate desperate families.

For some inexplicable reason, the Biden administration has made it official policy to finish the cartels' work for them and take these children to their new life, which could be as part of an MS-13 gang, or a labor work crew, or a sex trafficking ring. It could be with drug runners.

If you believe all these children are headed to their families, you're living in fantasyland.

Last week, Senator HAGERTY, Congressman FLEISCHMAN, and I sent a letter to HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra and OHS Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas asking for an explanation. We are still waiting for a satisfactory response.

But I will tell you, you cannot fix this crisis with a talking point. You cannot fix it by staying silent, as Secretaries Becerra and Mayorkas have chosen to be.

Parents are sending their children 1,000 miles across the continent in the custody of drug mules and sex traffickers because the administration has given them hope that if they take this one, unthinkable risk, the door will be open, and they will be able to follow their children into the country.

We have the power to stop this.

It is time to abandon talking points, address the root cause of the crisis, and secure our southern border before it is too late. Because if we have learned anything about how the cartels operate, the children who passed through Chattanooga last week, the ones who made it here, are the lucky ones.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

CENTENNIAL OF GAGLIANO'S ITALIAN MARKET & DELI

• Mr. BENNET. Madam President it is my honor to congratulate Gagliano's Italian Market & Deli on 100 years of successful entrepreneurship founded in culture, community, and family in Pueblo, CO. The Gagliano's story is one of multigenerational immigrant success and a heartening example of the American dream.

Giuseppe Gagliano, known as Joe, left Italy in 1918. The promise of steel mill work and American opportunity drew him to Pueblo. Maria Carmella DeAngelo—his neighbor from the farmlands just outside of Palermo in Lucca, Sicily—followed him and they were married in 1920. Soon, they had their first child, Rose. In 1921, however, a catastrophic flood destroyed their first home. Later, they lost their second child, Francis, to illness. Despite these tragedies, the Gaglianos persisted in finding opportunity.

Joe began the family's legacy of entrepreneurship by saving enough

money selling milk from his cow before and after his shifts at the mill. Later that year, he used \$300 in savings to buy the empty lot next to their new Elm Street home to build an attached store.

Joe and Maria Gagliano's market stocked a wide variety of sought-after Italian foods and specialties that became popular with Pueblo's diverse immigrant community. Carmella soon developed the recipe for her classic Italian sausage that quickly became a mainstay of the business. While they nurtured their entrepreneurial success, they showed compassion to customers during the Great Depression by never pursuing unpaid debts under the interest free credit they offered. The Gaglianos and their extended family who helped to run the store also took pride in their hard work to become U.S. citizens.

The Gagliano's story shows the great power of family bonds with four generations having owned and operated the store, cultivating both its historic identity and its business growth over the decades. Founders Joe and Carmella Gagliano passed away in 1966 and 1992, respectively. In 1994, Joe and Rose (Gagliano) Cortese retired from the business. Their successors in owning and operating the store are Tony Gagliano, the nephew of original founder Joe, along with his wife Josephine and children, Bonnie and Vince.

I am grateful to commemorate this special moment that is a living reflection of the American dream. I wish for a pleasant community celebration of this milestone in Pueblo on June 26, 2021, as well. May the Gagliano family and their Italian Market & Deli take pride in their century of success and find many more years of prosperity and health to come.●

125TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MARYLAND STATE BAR ASSOCIATION

• Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, I rise to ask the Senate to join me in recognizing the Maryland State Bar Association on the 125th anniversary of its founding. Since its founding on August 28, 1896, the Maryland State Bar Association, MSBA, has advanced and protected the interests of Maryland attorneys, their clients, and the general public.

Over the past 125 years, the MSBA has grown into a premier professional trade association comprised of over 20,000 members from every segment of the legal profession. This includes large law firms, solo and small-firm practitioners, government lawyers, in-house counsel, nonprofit attorneys, judges, and legal academics. The MSBA has steadfastly supported the Maryland legal community in its important work to serve the public interest, facilitate commerce, and create a more fair and just society.

In the decades since its founding, the MSBA has advanced and supported the

demographic diversification of the Maryland bar. In partnership with the Judiciary of Maryland and numerous nonprofit partners, the MSBA and in particular its Committee on Diversity & Inclusion have fostered policies and programs to enhance the diversity of the practice of law in the State to the benefit of all Marylanders. The committee is charged with promoting recruitment, hiring, and retention processes to create environments within the legal community in which all individuals are encouraged to join, thrive, and lead the legal profession regardless of race, color, gender, gender identity, disability, sexual orientation, national origin, or any other characteristic of identity.

Over the years, the MSBA has also expanded its vision and mission to include efforts to promote access to civil legal services. The association has advocated for legislation to support the Maryland Legal Services Corporation, a critically important organization that raises and distributes funds to nonprofit organizations that provide civil legal assistance to low-income individuals in Maryland. As chair of the corporation from 1988 to 1995, I know firsthand the extraordinary and needed service that it provides. In addition, MSBA has in recent years integrated the operations of the Maryland Access to Justice Commission, an independent entity that convenes partners from the State attorney general to the private sector, to academia, to advance equal access to the civil justice system.

In the community at-large, the MSBA has played a significant role in enhancing civic literacy in Maryland, including by hosting thousands of high school students participating in mock trial and moot court competitions. These programs offer students the opportunity to enhance their skills and expose them to the practical implications and importance of the law. As a Maryland lawyer myself, I ask the Senate to join me in congratulating the Maryland State Bar Association for its exemplary service to the Maryland legal community over the past 125 years.●

RECOGNIZING THE FIRST CLASS OF GRADUATES FROM THE KIRK KERKORIAN SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

• Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Madam President, I rise to recognize the graduating class from the Kirk Kerkorian School of Medicine at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. This is an incredible milestone in the school and university's history, as well as for Southern Nevada. Fifty students who began their studies 4 years ago as the charter class of medical students had their degree of medical doctor MD, conferred earlier this month on May 7, 2021.

For Southern Nevada, this is a pinnacle achievement because until now, Las Vegas was the largest metropolitan area in the Nation without an MD-